



Council of the
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'I/A' ITEM NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
Subject:	Notice of intention to issue a Joint Statement at the European Union - Republic of Korea Digital Partnership Council (30 June 2023, Seoul) and a Joint Statement at the European Union - Japan Digital Partnership Council (3-4 July 2023, Tokyo) - Authorisation to negotiate non-binding instruments

1. On 9 December 2021, the Working Party on Telecommunications and Information Society was informed by the European Commission, in a note¹, of its intention to start discussions on individual Digital Partnerships with Japan, the Republic of Korea (RoK) and Singapore with a view to establishing cooperation on the digital transformation of the economy and society.
2. The Commission clarified that the Digital Partnerships would take the form of non-binding instruments² addressing the four pillars of the EU Digital Compass³: infrastructures, skills, digital transformation of businesses and digitalisation of public services, and could include other areas facilitating cooperation in digital and trade.

¹ WK 15233/21

² Arrangements relatifs aux instruments non contraignants conclus par les secrétaires généraux de la Commission, du Conseil et du SEAE en décembre 2017 (ST 15367/17).

³ https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/communication-digital-compass-2030_en.pdf

3. Following Coreper's approval on 16 February 2022, the Council authorised the Commission to negotiate the Digital Partnerships with Japan, the Republic of Korea (RoK) and Singapore in the form of non-binding instruments on 22 February 2022⁴. The Council authorised the signature of the Digital Partnerships with Japan on 11 May, with the Republic of Korea on 14 November, and with Singapore on 19 December 2022. The three Digital Partnerships were then signed separately by early 2023⁵.
4. At the meeting of the Working Party on Telecommunications and the Information Society on 31 May 2023, the Commission informed delegations of its intention to enter into discussions to draw up a Joint Statement with Japan and a Joint Statement with the Republic of Korea (ROK) on behalf of the EU, in the context of the first meetings of the EU-Japan and the EU-ROK Digital Partnership Councils (on 3-4 July 2023 in Tokyo and on 30 June 2023 in Seoul, respectively)⁶.
5. The aim of the EU-Japan and EU-ROK Joint Statements is to reaffirm the political commitment of the EU to the Digital Partnerships signed in 2022 and to validate the results of the cooperation and the concrete deliverables arising from the implementation of the provisions of each Digital Partnership.
6. In accordance with the arrangements on non-binding instruments, the Commission committed to regularly inform the Working Group on Telecommunications and Information Society and other relevant groups on the progress made with Japan and the Republic of Korea development, and to revert to the Council to request its authorisation for the signature of each Joint Statement.
7. In view of the above, the Permanent Representatives Committee is invited to recommend that the Council:
 - authorises the Commission to negotiate Joint Statements with Japan and ROK, as set out in document WK 6927/23.

⁴ 5862/22

⁵ The first Digital Partnership was launched at the Japan-EU Summit on 12 May 2022. The EU and the Republic of Korea signed their Digital Partnership on 28 November 2022, and the Digital Partnership between the EU and Singapore was signed on 1 February 2023.

⁶ WK 6927/2023